

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 4, 2024

MEDIA CONTACT: Madison Hitchcock, [mhitchcock@cowlitz.org](mailto:mhitchcock@cowlitz.org)



## **Cowlitz Indian Tribe Elects New General Council Chairman Bill Iyall for Second Stint as Chair**

*Chairman Iyall intends to lead the Tribe towards a future of economic prosperity and embrace culture and unity among the Cowlitz People.*

[RIDGEFIELD, WA] Over the weekend at its semi-annual General Council Meeting, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe elected Bill Iyall as the Tribe’s new General Council Chair. Iyall took office immediately following Saturday’s vote, beginning his second stint as Chairman. The Tribe also re-elected its General Council Secretary, William Erickson, and filled six open seats on Tribal Council.

Chairman Iyall first served the Cowlitz Tribe as Chairman in 2008, and was subsequently re-elected for four consecutive terms, until his initial retirement in 2020. Under Chairman Iyall’s leadership, the Tribe established their reservation in Ridgefield, WA in 2015, and eventually opened their Casino Resort ilani in 2017.

**“As the newly elected Tribal Chairman, I am filled with gratitude and excitement for the future of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe,”** said Chairman Iyall. **“It is an honor to serve the Cowlitz people again in this capacity. I eagerly look forward to working alongside the Tribal Council and continuing our course toward deepened prosperity, economic opportunity, and self-determination. Together, we will work to uphold the values and traditions sacred to the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, preserve our ancestral homelands, protect our sovereignty, and ensure a brighter future for our Tribe and our communities for generations to come.”**

Also sworn in immediately following the election was General Council Secretary William Erickson, who was initially appointed to the position in 2023. Erickson was first elected to Tribal Council in 2021.

Six Tribal Council members were also selected on Saturday and will be sworn in next month:

- Steve Barnett
- Dean Vernon Reynolds
- Tim Van Mechelen
- Stephen Henry Kutz
- William McTurnal
- Michelle Lawrence

**About the Cowlitz Indian Tribe**

The Cowlitz Indian Tribe is a growing force in community building in the Pacific Northwest. The Cowlitz Reservation neighbors Ridgefield, Washington, and is home to ilani, the Pacific Northwest's premier gaming, dining, meeting, and entertainment destination. The mission of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe is to preserve and honor the legacy of its elders and ancestors by empowering a tribal community that promotes social justice and economic well-being, secures aboriginal lands, respects culture and sovereignty, and fosters justice, freedom, and mutual welfare. More information can be found at [cowlitz.org](http://cowlitz.org).